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January 15, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. J. LEE RANKIN

FROM: Howard P. Willens

SUBJECT: Meeting with Representatives of C.I.A. January 14, 1964.

This memorandum summarizes the meeting with Mr. Helms of CIA, two of his associates, Mr. [illegible], and myself which took place yesterday afternoon at the offices of the Central Intelligence Agency.

At the beginning of the meeting you and Mr. Dulles reviewed the special interest of the Commission in getting the assistance of CIA. You indicated that we believed that a request should be made to the Soviet Union soliciting more information regarding the activities of Lee Harvey Oswald in the Soviet Union. In addition, you indicated that the Commission is interested in securing as much information as possible through the sources of CIA regarding Oswald's activities in the Soviet Union and Mexico.

The representatives of CIA informed us that they are currently [illegible] a review from their files regarding Lee Harvey Oswald. They indicated that there were considerable gaps in their information regarding his activities. They informed us that they have experts within and without their agency who will be of assistance in preparing questions to be addressed to the Soviet Union. They also indicated that they did not believe they could help very much regarding Oswald's activities while he was in the Soviet Union and [illegible] with [illegible] of their agency regarding the activities of [illegible].

After further discussion an understanding was reached on the following matters:

1. It was agreed that we would attempt to obtain the necessary security clearance on the members of our staff working in the foreign area as soon as possible.

2. We agreed that the request to the Soviet Union would be prepared with the assistance of CIA and submitted through State Department channels.

3. CIA will complete and submit the report on Lee Harvey Oswald currently in progress.

4. We will adhere to the statutory line of jurisdiction regarding the responsibilities of CIA and the FBI.

5. On matters within the CIA's jurisdiction, we will deal directly with that agency rather than through the FBI. Similarly, representatives of CIA will submit relevant information directly to the Commission rather than to the FBI.

6. CIA will assist us in preparing for the taking of Marina Oswald's testimony. To enable them to be of assistance, we will supply them as soon as possible with a draft list of questions and any supporting documents prepared by our staff.

7. It was agreed that CIA would assist the Commission in preparing the questions to be submitted to the Soviet Union. There was a difference of views expressed at the [illegible] within which adequate questions could be prepared. Mr. Rankin indicated his view that the matter should be handled as quickly as possible and that [illegible] general questions would be adequate. The representatives of CIA expressed the view that the questions should be as specific as possible and that it would be advisable to take more time, [illegible] 4 - 5 weeks, to prepare the initial submission to the Soviet Union.

8. It was agreed that the Commission would supply CIA with certain [illegible] materials which are pertinent to [illegible] to enable them to be of greater assistance. [illegible] learned that CIA currently has in its possession only the initial five volumes of the FBI summary report.

9. It was agreed that CIA might make material supplied by this Commission available to its own outside consultants in order to gain the benefit of their expertise. The various risks associated with this course of action were discussed and it was agreed that this course should nevertheless be done in the exercise of that agency's best judgment.